

REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



To: Park Board

Agenda Item #: VI.A.

From: Susan Faus
Assistant Parks and Recreation Director

Action ☒

Discussion ☐

Date: May 14, 2013

Information ☐

Subject: Off Leash Area Pilot at Strachauer Park

Action Requested:

Approval of a seasonal pilot off leash area for dogs at Strachauer Park (April – October).

Information / Background:

At the February 12 Park Board meeting, per resident requests, staff introduced the idea of adding an off leash area at one of the hockey rinks. The Park Board requested that staff determine two locations that would be the ideal locations for this pilot. At the March 12 Park Board meeting, staff recommended two possible locations, Highlands Park and Pamela Park. After further research, neither of the suggested locations would work well with our current recreational programming.

At the April 9 Park Board meeting, staff made a recommendation for Strachauer Park to be the location of the pilot off leash seasonal dog area. After further review, it was determined that the location is a good option based on several factors. It is easily accessible and conveniently located on the east side of Edina; the hockey rink is full sized with a grass/sand surface; the Parks & Recreation Department does not have any playground programs that utilize this location during the spring or summer; and there is adequate parking and neighborhood access.

The City would install a gate to close off the hockey rink to keep dogs inside the dog area. Signage would be provided that clearly states the rules and regulations along with user etiquette similar to what is posted at VanValkenburg off leash area (OLA). No additional ordinances or policy changes are needed. All dogs must be licensed and be required to purchase an OLA permit. An OLA collar will be issued and must be visible while using the dog park. The expenses associated with this project; a gate (\$450), signage (\$450), and dog waste bags (\$1,000).

This off leash area would reinforce an on-going community effort to sustain, enhance and grow the quality of life for residents and pet owners. It offers additional solutions for walkable neighborhoods versus driving to the other OLA at Van Valkenburg.

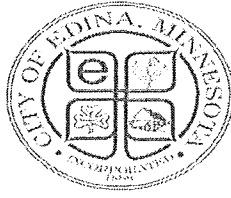
ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Aerial Map of Strachauer Park
- B. Rules & Regulations and Rules of Etiquette
- C. Neighborhood Notification and Public Hearing Letter



To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.





Off Leash Use Area (OLA)

Rules and Regulations

City of Edina

- Use hours are 6 A.M. to 10 P.M.
- Dogs must wear a resident or non-resident OLA collar, which can be purchased online at www.Edinamn.gov or in person at Edina City Hall.
- Dogs must be properly vaccinated.
- Leash dogs while entering and exiting the off leash area.
- By law, you are responsible for damage and injuries inflicted by your dog.
- Individual dogs known to be aggressive are not permitted.
- Clean up after your dog and dispose of properly.
- Children under the age of 12 must be closely supervised by an adult. **Children age 6 and under are not allowed within the OLA.**
- No glass containers.
- No smoking.
- No female dogs in season.
- No unauthorized motorized equipment or vehicles.
- No bikes.



Off Leash Area (OLA)

User Etiquette

City of Edina

- Don't bring a sick dog to OLA.
- Dog handlers must have a leash available for each dog at all times.
- Any dog exhibiting aggressive behavior must be leashed and removed immediately.
- Dog handlers must closely supervise their dog and be within view.
- Children under age 12 may not supervise dogs.
- Dogs must be within a voice or whistle control at all times.
- Maximum of two dogs per handler.
- Don't leave human garbage, food, food wrappers, cigarette butts, where dogs can reach them.
- Properly socialized and trained dogs make better pets and better visitors to the park.
- Train your dog in basic obedience.
- **Children** must be supervised at the OLA:
 - Do not allow running or screaming. Many dogs are not raised with children. A child who runs or screams can trigger a dog's herding or prey instinct, i.e. chasing or biting.
 - Do not give children treats to pass out to strange dogs. Treats can create competition. Children may be caught in the middle.
 - Do not allow your child to approach strange dogs without permission from the owner. A strange dog could feel challenged by a child's overly friendly approach and may snap or growl.

April 12, 2013

Dear Resident Neighbor of Strachauer Park:

This is to inform you of a proposed off-leash dog area within the Strachauer Park hockey rink that will be discussed at the Tuesday, May 14, 2013 Park Board meeting, which begins at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Edina City Hall.

The proposal is to allow dogs to use the outdoor hockey rink as an off-leash dog area during the non-winter season; however, dog owners would be required to purchase an off-leash annual permit. The permit would also be valid for use of the existing off-leash dog park at Van Valkenburg Park. The cost of the annual permit is \$25 per dog for residents and \$50 per dog for non-residents. The proposed off-leash dog area within the Strachauer hockey rink would require dog owners to pick up after their dogs. The hockey rink would be fitted with an appropriate entrance gate to confine the dogs. Signage that includes rules and regulations and user etiquette will also be prominently posted.

The proposal is to offer this venue on a trial basis. If this new park amenity is found to be successful, the Park Board may consider adding this seasonal amenity to other parks in Edina.

If you wish to share your views on this proposal please submit your comments in writing either by postal mail or email and address the letter to the Edina Park Board at my postal or email address shown below. You are also welcomed and encouraged to attend the Park Board meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. to share your views. If you have any questions about the proposed off-leash dog area, feel free to contact me. Many thanks.

Respectfully,

Susan Faus, Assistant Director
Edina Parks & Recreation Department
4801 W. 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424
(952) 826-0431
SFaus@EdinaMN.gov

Strachauer Park Dog Park (As of April 22, 2013)

From: Gail Davis [<mailto:gail@phyrtech.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 3:54 PM
To: Susan Faus
Subject: Strachauer Park

As 25 year residents who live 1 block from Strachauer Park, my husband and I are opposed to the "dog park" proposal as it is written. (We also own 2 large dogs).

Strachauer Park is already being used beyond it's maximum potential as a neighborhood park. Not only is it used for soccer MANY times a week, but Minneapolis and Richfield residents take over the basketball courts and parking lot on most weekends and some evenings. All these leave trash and personal belongings behind constantly and WE pick up after them. We want our park to be clean, safe and a source of pride especially since our son spearheaded the lilac hedge planting as his Eagle Project many years ago!

Increased traffic and decreased neighborhood security are an even bigger concern. We have many young children in the neighborhood and more traffic, more strangers and loose dogs decrease our sense of neighborhood and safety.

If Strachauer Park is your ONLY option for a dog park. We would like to see the rink used only by IMMEDIATE neighbors for dog use. The borders being Crosstown to 58th St. and France Ave. to Xerxes Ave. NO non-resident use! Since this a ridiculously small space to call a dog park and it is only seasonal, the fee should be no more than \$10/dog. Keep this a separate fee from the other dog parks. If owners want to use other parks, this fee could be applied toward that cost.

Lastly, we do not feel the need for yet another dog park in Edina, but if the need is there, Pamela Park could be looked at. It is bigger, more central and has little use except for tennis and hockey. Please share this with the city council members.

Thank You,
Tim and Gail Davis
6200 Chowen Ave. So.
gail@phyrtech.com

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**From:** Lynn Franz [<mailto:lynnefranz@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 16, 2013 10:58 AM  
**To:** Susan Faus  
**Subject:** Off Leash Trial

Greetings

We live right by the park and received the letter regarding the trial. Just to let you know that we LOVE this idea and fully support it. It's a great way to use this resource that doesn't get much use in the summer.

We can't wait to bring our dog out to the park.

Best  
Lynn Franz & Joe Krueger  
6201 Chowen Ave S

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From: Mitzi Litman [<mailto:mlitman@mcg.net>]
Sent: Sunday, April 14, 2013 1:36 PM
To: Susan Faus
Subject: Strachauer Park dog park

Just want you to know I support having a dog park at Strachauer Park.
Mitzi Litman
6208 Chowen Av.

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**From:** Shirley Ramberg [<mailto:shirleyramberg@comcast.net>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 14, 2013 9:35 PM  
**To:** Susan Faus  
**Subject:** Off leash dog park at Strachauer Park

I received your letter announcing the possibility of an off leash dog park at Strachauer, just down the street and around the corner from my house. I am very opposed to it. Dog parks belong away from residential areas, please keep our little park in our corner of the city just the way it is! Don't need any more barking dogs in the neighborhood than there already are. I've called the police about one neighbor's barking dog several times last summer, (after he refuses to answer his phone) and don't believe he was ever called on it, quite possibly because he was, at least at one time, one of the police volunteers for the city for events like the July 4 parade, art fair, etc.

The past few years this park has attracted folks from, I'm sure, other parts of the cities, who use the basketball court, who I've referred to as the Taxi Squad! Yes, several taxies have been seen parked in the lot, or on the street, and a group of 10-12 plus or minus, fellows having a game of basketball. As far as I know, they haven't caused any problems, but one wonders if they might be doing other things than playing basketball!